

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL HALIFAX

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 619

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONSUL QUEBEC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, ENRG, CA

SUBJECT: JOINT NEW ENGLAND GOVERNORS' -EASTERN PREMIERS'
CONFERENCE ON PRINCEEDWARD ISLAND

1. AS WAS EXPECTED, ENERGY LOOMED LARGE AS SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION ON FIRST DAY OF TWO DAY CONFERENCE OF NEW ENGLAND GOVERNORS AND ATLANTIC PREMIERS AND QUEBEC DEPUTY PREMIER AT BRUDENELL, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

2. THE CONFERENCE AGREED UPON THE FORMATION OF A PERMANENT JOINT COMMITTEE WHICH IS TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING CLOSER COOPERATION IN ALL MATTERS RELATING TO SUPPLY OF ENERGY. PROPOSED COMMITTEE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE A SINGLE REPRESENTATIVE FROM EACH OF THE ELEVEN GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED. PRIME RESPONSIBILITY WOULD BE TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION WHICH WILL MORE CLOSELY RELATE ENERGY NEEDS OF NEW ENGLAND STATES WITH POSSIBLE SOURCES IN EASTERN CANADA.

3. IT IS REPORTED THAT NEW ENGLAND GOVERNORS TOOK INITIATIVE IN PLACING ENERGY ON AGENDA, AND RESOLUTION SETTING UP JOINT COMMITTEE WAS INTRODUCED BY MAINE'S GOVERNOR KENNETH CURTIS.

4. ONE FUNCTION OF COMMITTEE WOULD BE TO SUGGEST WAYS IN WHICH PROVINCIAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS COULD MAKE EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION

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TO THEIR RESPECTIVE FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS TO ACHIEVE A FREER FLOW OF

ENERGY BETWEEN THE TWO GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS.

5. DISCUSSION CENTERED PRIMARILY ON CONSTRUCTION OF OIL REFINERIES AT DEEP WATER SITES IN ATLANTIC PROVINCES TO PROVIDE NEW ENGLAND STATES WITH THEIR PRODUCTS. ALSO MENTIONED WAS THE HARNESSING OF TIDAL POWER AT BAY OF FUNDY AS SOURCE OF ELECTRICAL POWER FOR NEW ENGLAND STATES. THIS HAS BEEN REFERRED TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR CONSIDERATION. PREMIER HATFIELD OF NEW BRUNSWICK WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT UNTIL COSTS OF SUCH TIDAL ENERGY COULD BE BROUGHT INTO LINE WITH COSTS OF OTHER TYPES OF ENERGY PROJECT CANNOT GET UNDERWAY.

6. WHILE THERE WAS SOME MENTION OF EXCHANGE OF ENERGY IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT EMPHASIS WAS ON ATLANTIC PROVINCES SUPPLYING ENERGY NEEDS TO NEW ENGLAND STATES. PREMIER REGAN IS QUOTED AS SAYING, "THERE WILL BE NO TWO-WAY FLOW OF ENERGY... WE HAVE THE RESOURCES AND THEY HAVE THE NEED AND THE MONEY TO PAY FOR THEM."

7. PRESS SAYS THERE IS "SPECULATION AT CONFERENCE THAT NEW ENGLAND GOVERNORS WILL USE THE CANADIAN PREMIERS AS LEVERAGE IN THEIR ATTEMPT

TO GAIN MORE ENERGY CONCESSIONS FROM OTTAWA". PRESUMABLY THIS MEANS THAT THEY CAN POINT TO ECONOMIC BENIFITS ACCRUING TO ATLANTIC PROVINCES FROM REFINERIES BEING BUILT TO SUPPLY NEW ENGLAND AND THAT CANADIAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD THEREFORE BE WILLING TO MAKE ENERGY CONCESSIONS ELSEWHERE.

8. CONFERENCE IS TO DISCUSS TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF TWO GEOGRAPHIC AREAS AT SECOND DAY OF MEETING. SUITED TO ATMOSPHERE OF THE GOLF RESORT WHERE CONFERENCE TAKING PLACE, INFORMALITY IS ORDER OF DAY, WITH PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING MEETINGS IN SPORTS ATTIRE. REPORTED THAT YESTERDAY'S AFTERNOON MEETING DELAYED BECAUSE SOME MEMBERS STILL ON GOLF COURSE.

9. CONFERENCE ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE DISCUSSED UNRESOLVED BORDER PROBLEMS, EXPRESSING HOPE THAT THEY COULD BE SETTLED.
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